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The Cry of Creaturehood

BY GEORGE A. BUTTRICK

The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of Thine own hands. Psalm 138:8.

THERE is a story of a boy who never finished anything. He would grow tired of making a kite when it was only "cut out," and would instead begin to build a toy-city, which in its turn he would desert for a sled, which likewise was never completed. He dreamed, and was carried in his dream to "Half-finished Land." There the path to the front door of his home was paved only so far: beyond that point he had to clamber over a heap of dirt. The door itself had no lock. The floor was half-carpeted, and the walls half-papered. When he sat down to breakfast he found that the eggs were half-boiled. And at night he looked up from the half-made bed—directly at the stars, for the roof itself was only half-sealed. I read that story once to my sons. I suspect I may have begun in adult superiority. But in a moment or two I had little heart for what I read. For "aren't we all?" Our whole world is "Half-finished Land."

Schubert died at thirty-one, leaving an "Unfinished Symphony." Raphael died at thirty-seven, and in his funeral procession one of his unfinished canvasses was carried, the paint hardly dry. Richter lived longer—until he was sixty-two; but it is an irony that on his casket should have been laid his unfinished book on "Immortality"! Even if the Grim Reaper did not cut us down before we have scarcely begun to live, even if we had a reasonable time in which to grow a character (say, three or four millennia), there would still be the stubborn fact of our folly to render incomplete all that we have tried to do.

Some years ago a newspaper gave account of a tennis player as follows: "An otherwise brilliant performance was spoiled by an unfortunate display of temperament." How much of life is "spoiled" by displays of "tempera-

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ment" or selfishness or fleshliness! Every man's life must be marked "Unfinished Business." "The Lord will *perfect* that which concerneth me." Oh, *will* he? No stopping short in God's plans, says this human, human heart of old: "Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth forever." Then the encroaching doubt perchance; and the pathetic, noble, universal prayer: "Forsake not the works of Thine own hands!"

I

What claim have we for believing that God will make good what we have botched?

Well, there is a Plan. The astronomer calculates by it when he foretells to a fraction of a minute, for a date maybe far beyond his life-span, the next eclipse of the sun. The farmer works by it: the seasons are faithful, seedtime and harvest do not fail. We cannot fit the detailed happening into the total purpose. We are often baffled, our dark and cabined minds unable to comprehend the outworkings of the cosmic scheme. For instance, we say glibly that the Plan brings difficulty in life so that we, wrestling with the untoward or the newly challenging, may win our souls; or that the Plan grants us freedom of will, whatever tragedies our freedom may bring on ourselves or our neighbors, since only the free can love God. But when we have said it, somebody may suddenly fling the question at us (as somebody *did* fling it at me in a civic forum recently), "Why, if the Universe is kind, was the Mattson boy given into the hands of a fiend or a man insane?" There is no answer—except in heart-wrung sympathy.

Yet, despite all that seems blind or devilish, we persist in believing that our world is ruled by purpose. If life did not strike us as rational, we ourselves would probably take leave of our senses. The details may seem capricious or demoniac, but the ground of life is faithful. There are, for example, marvelous correspondences: the lens of the eye and this world of sights are made for each other; the tympanum and nerve of the ear are exquisitely matched with the music of tree and stream; the craft of the hand finds in pigment, or wood, or marble the medium exactly fitted to its skill. In profounder fact, the voracious mind discovers on every side a wonder and mystery that provoke and answer its seeking. Marvelous correspondences!

Nor is the Plan merely "general": it is wrought out to the minutest detail. It is as faithful in the smallest as in the greatest. The reddest light our eye can see has a wave-length of only three one-hundred-thousandths of an inch, and the most violet light has a wave-length twice as small. All light travels at a speed of one hundred and eighty-six thousand miles a second. This means that in one second the number of "red" waves to pass a fixed point is four hundred million million, and the number of "violet" waves is eight hundred million million. "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me"—for the Plan pulses through the lowliest member as completely as through the vastest star. There is a Plan; and it gathers every life within its orbit.

II

Moreover, the Plan has at least begun its work in us. We admit as much every time we use the word, "evolution." Something is unfolding from the simple to th complex, from the savage to the civilized. In our cynic moods we may wonder if mankind has made much pro ress. To choke one another with poison-gas is no bette and perhaps worse, than to "brain" one another wit cave-man clubs. But even in that issue there is growt of soul; for, whereas in the savage there was only th dimmest consciousness that to club out a neighbor brains was wrong, there is in our age a widespread con viction that a population in gas-masks is grotesque—a affront to intelligence, heart and conscience.

Dr. George A. Gordon reminded us that when th Oregon, which forty-five years ago was the fastest an finest ship on the Atlantic, went to the bottom of th ocean off Long Island, discipline held everywhere ex cept among the stokers. One who knew the horror i which they worked, excused them, saying: "You coul expect nothing else: only devils can come out of hell. Working conditions across the world have improve incalculably, and though there is room yet for kindnes

> . . . I doubt not through the ages, one increasing purpos runs,
> And the thoughts of men are widened with the proces of the suns.

Carry this fact of a "good work begun" to your ow life. Despite all earthiness ideals have flashed their ligh on you; despite all ingrained instinct to save your ow skin there have been moments when you would gladl have flung life away for a cause; and though this cit with its rags and riches, its noise and grasping, appall you, the city itself has many glints of glory, and in th illumined hour you have seen a "city that hath founda tions, whose builder and maker is God." It is said tha a group of freshmen carried a banner at the three hun dredth anniversary of their college, and the inscriptio had incisive humor: "This University has waited thre hundred years for us." You also can look back upon th past, mark what is high and what is base, and feel tha you are heir to all its saintliness and courage. By ex ample and bestowal, by quickening and discipline of th spirit and the years, a good work has been begun in you

You say it is half-finished only or scarce begun? Eve so, God would not be God if he could be thwarted; o if, like the man building the tower, he began and coul not finish. It is easier to believe that Schubert finishe his "Unfinished Symphony" in some sky, than to believ that its loveliness is forever like a tree with amputate branches.

III

"The Lord will *perfect* that which concerneth me" we can cling to the faith just because that word "per fect" is in our language. There is in our nature prophetic "drive" toward completeness. Was any tru artist ever satisfied with his pictures, or any surgeo with his skill, or any scholar with his knowledge? John Stuart Mill once exclaimed, "Better to be a man dis satisfied than a pig satisfied." He could have truthfully said, "Better be a man dissatisfied than an angel sat isfied."

Dr. J. A. Hadfield has reminded us that even a tiny creature, the newt, if its limb is cut off, will grow

new limb. If a man's limb is cut off he cannot grow a new limb, but all the forces of healing in him rush to the wound, like reinforcements to the breach in the wall of a beleaguered city. Dr. Hadfield entitles his chapter (it is in the book entitled *Psychology and Morals)* "The Law of Completeness," and the first sentence reads: "Every organism is impelled to move towards its own completeness." Hence this word, "perfect": "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me."

The explorer must chart all lands—and then take to the air, from which no airplane accidents will for long deter him. The astronomer must penetrate further and further into the mysteries of space. The virtuous man must ever ask, in undying conscience, "What lack I yet?" The compassionate man can set no bounds to his compassion: if he is David Livingstone living in Scotland he goes to grapple with the need of Africa. Maurice Maeterlinck tells of an old mansion in Bruges on whose beams is inscribed the motto: "Within me there is more"; and he writes: "So too might man exclaim." So far from our sins telling the truth about us, not even our best yearnings can tell it. Within every man there is more—though how pathetically overlaid! More—though how tragically unrealized! Yet the hope does not die.

GEORGE A. BUTTRICK

A university dean showed me the library: its steel stacks are themselves the beams and uprights of the building: they seem endless in extent, and they climb into the sky. But he said regretfully: "This will not last us more than so many years." Ever wider, ever higher, ever deeper: "Every organism" (including the eternal man) "is impelled to move towards its own completeness." "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me." The flesh does not at long last concern us, nor years. But, as for that which really concerns our destiny, "the Lord will perfect *that*. . . ."

IV

But can we be sure? No; there will always be the writhing of the doubt. Of Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony" nobody has ever heard the third movement. Richter's book on immortality *was* incomplete—and carried on a casket! And, despite the Plan, the world at times seems wild and cruel. Doubts insinuate. Thus, though a man may say with clear intelligence, "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever," his last word will ever be a prayer: "Forsake not the works of Thine own hands."

We did not bring ourselves to the birth. To grant our parents' act is but to press back the mystery one generation: they came to this planet without their knowledge or consent. Who among us has not wondered why he was not born in the sixteenth century when Don John of Austria rode home from the crusades or in the twenty-fifth century when, perhaps, metropolitan areas shall be broken up and everyone shall have a decent home, and men shall fly home from work in an airplane? We did not choose our original endowment of body and mind: some people go through life rebellious that the gift was so comparatively meager. We did not choose our place on the planet. How little we do for ourselves! How overwhelmingly the Plan controls us!

"But," someone says, "we have sinned, and many a folly is all our own." Yes, in truth. Yet, even so, an erring child has the right to come to a parent and say: "I know I have done wrong, but I am your flesh and blood. To disown me would be inhuman. Nay, worse: for an animal will defend its own." So a man may say to God, whose mysterious Plan brought him to the birth:

> Thou wilt not leave him in the dust:
> Thou madest man: he knows not why;
> He thinks he was not made to die;
> And Thou hast made him: Thou art just.

How small we are! How little we know! What forces play upon us! From what eternities of travail we came, and into what eternities we fare forth! What can we do but pray the noble, pathetic, universal prayer: "Lord, forsake not the works of Thine own hands."

V

Perhaps that prayer is the true safeguard against despair. To despair would be easy. For though it is true, as we have said, that a longing for peace was never so widespread, it is likewise true that preparations for war were never so diabolical. To think that most of the hard-earned money paid in income taxes should go for guns and gas to kill some poor fellow whom we have never seen and who no more wishes to kill us than we to kill him! To think that Europe should be at the threat of this man whose ego is so inflamed that nobody dare jest with him or remind him that he is getting older, or of that man who is almost an hysteric or a megalomaniac! To think that in our own land the per-

centage of child labor should enormously increase as soon as the ban against it is lifted! Yes, the texture of life is rational; but so often the details seem all awry. Perhaps they have always seemed awry. Listen to this:

> Our earth is degenerate in these latter days: there are signs that the world is speedily coming to an end: bribery and corruption are common: children no longer obey their parents.

Where is that written? In yesterday's newspaper? No; it is an inscription in a museum. It was written twenty-eight hundred years before Christ. Perhaps the world has always seemed awry—as odds for faith. There were no "good old days." But there are always "good days to come"—if, if we pray, and then try to live the prayers.

No use railing at the world. No use splattering our doubts upon our neighbors—which is the literary fashion of the time. Better to pray: "Lord, forsake not the works of Thine own hands." Francis did it, and the Plan moved freely through his days. Jesus did it: how he prayed, and with what white vigil! Then the Spirit had liberty in his life! The channels were not clogged; there was no friction of doubt; no cluttering fear. Here now was a Man with whom God could do as he would. So that Man's words became more than words, and that Man's very death became Life! Why? Because his will was lost in the Great Will that lifted the stars, and has guided our world from that day when all things were "without form and void" until now, and in whose hands are the issues of life and death: his will was lost, and found, in that Will. The answer to our fears is in prayer, and in that resolute walk which prayer dictates and inspires.

Here is the ultimate hope, and the cry of creature-hood: "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of Thine own hands."

Undying Flame

By David A. MacLennan

The fire shall ever be burning on the altar; it shall never go out. Leviticus 6:13.

UNDER the Arc de Triomphe in Paris is a plain slab marking the tomb of the Unknown Soldier of France. In the slab a tiny flame burns constantly. The eternal flame symbolizes the perpetual devotion of the republic to the memory of the vast host who died that France and her ideals might live. Throughout the ages the ever-burning fire has been a symbol of those intangible things which the human heart insists should never be extinguished. In the ancient directory of public worship for the Jews in Palestine—the Book of Leviticus—there is a specific instruction concerning the fire on the altar. "The fire shall ever be burning on the altar; it shall never go out." The Book of Leviticus is perhaps the least read book in the Old Testament. Even for the Jews most of its laws have been a dead letter since the destruction of the Temple. Leviticus provided the rubrics for a form of worship which is practically extinct. Nevertheless, this is one regulation which has a meaning for us. To the Jews it meant that there was always a fire prepared and ready whenever any sacrifice had to be offered. Let a worshiper come when he pleased, he had not to wait till the fire on the altar was kindled. "The fire shall ever be burning on the altar; it shall never go out."

I

In the first place, this ancient instruction may well serve to remind us of an obligation we may not evade without serious consequences to our character and service. We are to maintain the fires of devotion on the altar we have dedicated to the worship of the Christlike God. No sacrifice was possible without the fire. So no offering of love is possible or complete without the spirit of devotion. How many opportunities come to us each day, opportunities in which we can offer something worthy, which pass unused because in our hearts there is not the fire of devotion. "It is not from lack of opportunities that we suffer. Every day brings them to us. It is not from want of knowing what is right that keeps us back; it is the want of a constant readiness to do what we know."

Is any life safe from the assaults of discontent that has not the defensive power of a noble enthusiasm? When you obey Emerson's advice, and hitch your wagon to the star of a great purpose, the star irradiates the wagoner and protects him by the ministry of sacred flame. As Jowett once wrote: "When he arrives with his wagon at the end of the road, be the wagon empty or full, he himself will be as clean as a priest of the Lord; nay, he is a priest of the Lord, clothed in linen pure and white, ministering at the altar of labor, on which there burns the fire divine. His fiery passion is his defense."

But when our enthusiasm cools, the fire which brings warmth and light and cheer to others is endangered. When radiation ceases, invasion by subtle enemies begins. On that October day in 1555 when Hugh Latimer turned to his colleague in martyrdom and spoke the familiar words, "Play the man, good master Ridley, for we shall light a candle this day which by God's grace shall never go out," he joined the ranks of the immortal fire-bringers. But what if other less conspicuous souls had treated the heritage of faith in freedom indifferently? How impoverished would a large section of the world be today!

So to a disquieting number of men and women today comes the question: What are you doing to tend the altar fires of high religious faith in God and man? I would not speak this word to anyone incapacitated by illness or declining years, but I would speak challengingly to the able-bodied spiritual invalids whose altar fires have burned low. Do not let us fool ourselves concerning the things we publicly inherit. With gratitude you may speak appreciatively of the high traditions of the race, but remember that there are realms of experience which by no possibility can you inherit. In them each person as he arrives must feed the altar fires. You can inherit real estate but not friendship. You may purchase an annuity but not home life. I cannot delegate another to tend the fires of inward personal char-

acter. "There are no proxies for the soul." As an astute Christian observer puts it: "Multitudes of people in Christendom have no more Christianity than they can outwardly inherit—its forms and customs. Yet, living in a world where the spiritual life is available, it is a tragedy not to have some of it for one's own and be able to say of its inner faiths, its deep resources, its saving virtues, 'This is mine.'"

In one of his messages to the United States Congress, President Roosevelt closed with an impressive quotation from one whom he called a teacher of his youth. The philosopher was Josiah Royce of Harvard. The keyword of Royce's thinking was loyalty: "So be loyal, that is, so seek, so accept, so serve your cause that hereby the

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loyalty of all men, through your example . . . shall be aided, furthered, increased—so far as in you lies. Be so loyal to your cause as thereby to advance universal loyalty."

Intermittent attention to a fire never resulted in satisfactory warmth. So, intermittent attention to the flame of social worship, of personal devotion to the best you know, never results in a satisfactory religious experience. Opportunity to display courage in adversity finds us unprepared. Opportunity to help a lamed pilgrim over a stile finds us unready, because we have forgotten that "the fire shall ever be burning on the altar; it shall never go out."

Does someone wish to interrupt here and suggest that it is well-nigh impossible to maintain what St. Paul called "the spiritual glow"? That in certain seasons, Christmas and Easter for example, the fire burns with a bright and satisfying flame, but that when Monday returns and the trivial round is resumed there are only embers left? May not the reason for our gradual decline of devotion and interest lie in our expectation that sudden and great emotions will be sufficient? You will understand what the saintly Murray McCheyne prayed for when he cried, "O Lord, hold me on at a steady pace." "A steady pace"—yes, that is what is wanted; "to go on forever and fall and go on again." How can this be done? How can you keep the fires ever burning? Well, Stevenson insisted that a valiant soul could feel

> . . . in the ink of the slough,
> And the sink of the mire,
> Veins of glory and fire
> Run through and transpierce and transpire,
> And a secret purpose of glory in every part,
> And the answering glory of battle fill the heart.

How can this be?

II

It can be felt, and the fire kept burning through the long days and nights of our sojourn by keeping close to Him who is our divine Prometheus. You remember the old Greek myth of Prometheus, who went up to heaven, lighted his torch at the chariot of the sun, and stealing fire, brought it down to earth. The Olympians never meant that man should have the secrets of fire and endeavored to recover the gift made by Prometheus. But this champion of man against the old gods suffered through the ages that he might bring light and warmth and mastery into the world of men.

Reverently, I say that our Lord and Master, Christ, is in fact all that the best of the old stories attributed to Prometheus.

And Jesus is the Prince of the Prophets and King of Saints. Dr. Burkitt, the Cambridge scholar, writes in *The History of Christianity:* "Modern representations of Jesus Christ have tended to portray him as above all a Teacher, a Wise Sage who saw by unerring instinct what was essential in human life and conduct. But his special characteristic cannot have been that of the Sage, the Teacher, the Founder. It was something distinct from all these, something so well expressed by Renan at the end of his St. Paul: 'The Son of God is unique. To appear for a moment, to flash forth a sympathetic but piercing radiance, to die very young, that is the life of a God. To struggle, to argue, to convince, that is the life of a Man . . . Paul is now seeing the end of his reign; Jesus, on the contrary, is more alive than ever.' That is more than fine rhetoric; it is an expression of historical truth." No, "it is not as a Philosopher but as Prometheus, that we worship Christ—the Man who came down from heaven to give men the Divine Fire. Jesus himself once described his mission as that of a man lighting a fire, and whatever course he may have taken in doing it, it is at least certain that his Fire has burned for nineteen centuries and that it is alight still. The way the Fire was lit finds its justification in the history of the Fire."

> I know of lands that are sunk in shame,
> Of hearts that faint and tire;
> But I know a Name, a Name, a Name,
> That can set those lands on fire.
> Its sound is a brand, its letters flame,
> I know a Name, a Name, a Name,
> That will set those lands on fire.

I know of minds that are sunk in shame,
Of hearts that faint and tire;
But I know a source of mystic fame
That can set those minds on fire.
I know a force of glowing flame
That will set our souls on fire.

There is an uncanonical saying of Jesus which reads: "Whoso is near me is near the fire." It has the ring of authenticity. Men as different in temperament and ability as St. Francis and Martin Luther, John Knox and John Woolman, St. Augustine and Phillips Brooks, David Livingstone and Albert Schweitzer, Calvin and Kagawa have become light-bringers to humanity because they have been near that Undying Flame of the Spirit of Jesus.

He is the Undying Flame. Again and again his vital teaching has been all but lost, and again and again it has been revealed in its essence as an undying flame which, when kindled in the hearts of men and women everywhere, will lead a world out of its shadowed caves of ignorance into an era of progress and brotherhood.

Have we failed to maintain the spiritual glow? Have we neglected the fire on our altars? Keep close to the living Christ! Enthusiasm for humanity will not energize the most altruistic spirit for ever. Enthusiasm for Christ and his way of living toward God and among men will supply the dynamic required to live well. You would have a more brotherly society? A more fraternal order of men? But welding diverse elements is a hopeless task. Molten affections, fluid sympathies will cause brotherhood to flow like molten streams from a central fire. And that fire is found in him who is the Light and Warmth of the world. Thank God, every one of us can bring fuel to the holy fire. We can strengthen it with knowledge, feed it with thought, quicken it with expression and deepen it with prayer. This is something other and better than conventional religious observance. This is vital religion, issuing in fruitful service to humanity.

Come Holy Spirit, heavenly dove,
With all thy quickening powers,
Kindle a flame of sacred love
On these cold hearts of ours.

Yes, that first and always, but we are to carry the flame to barren hearths. We must go forth to offer fresh offerings in Christ's spirit that others may find the Undying Flame.

Many will know the famous story of Mrs. Katie Walker and the Robbins Reef Lighthouse in New York Harbor. Her husband was the keeper of the lighthouse and was stricken with serious illness which necessitated his removal to the hospital on Staten Island. Mrs. Walker remained on Robbins Reef to do his work. One dark day the message came that he had entered into the Land where the Lamb is the Light thereof. "We buried him," said Mrs. Walker, "in the cemetery on the hill over there. Every morning I stand at this porthole and look in the direction of his grave. Sometimes the hills are green, sometimes they are brown, sometimes they are white with snow. But they always have a message for me. Something I heard my husband say more often than anything else. Just three words—'Mind the light!' "

"The fire shall ever be burning on the altar; it shall never go out."

Two Kinds of Intelligence

By Lynn Harold Hough

So I hated life. Ecclesiastes 2:17.

I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly. John 10:10.

A GOOD many astonishingly superficial and unrealistic tributes have been paid to the intellectual life. Men have spoken and written as if a cultivated intelligence somehow insured bright happiness and creative serenity and profound satisfaction. Educators in addresses which did not rise above the level of facile and plausible "sales talks" have commended their wares by offering college and university courses as panaceas in respect of the good life and responsible citizenship. So it has come about that many people have romantic and uncritical views of the intellectual life.

The truth is that a cultivated intelligence is like a master key which may be used to unlock doors into all sorts of places. No men lose their way more completely than those who are bewildered by their own intelligence. A clever and highly trained mind may be an instrument of moral confusion. With the utmost seriousness we may paraphrase the words of Edith Cavell and say "Intelligence is not enough." For intelligence may lead to frustration or intelligence may lead to permanent satisfaction.

Everything depends on the quality of the intelligence and its power to follow the guidance of moral passion and spiritual understanding.

I

The author of the book of Ecclesiastes—which has been called the cellar of the Old Testament—belonged to the company of "the wise." His mind had been fertilized by the cumulative sagacity of his own race and it had been enriched by an infusion of Greek culture. He had brought this seasoned intelligence to the contemplation of the human scene. His verdict is almost brutal in its frank cynicism: "So I hated life." Intelligence had not provided him with moral passion or spiritual vision. He had found no fountain of creative vitality. He had found no high spiritual discipline. He had found no source of permanent satisfaction.

The case of the author of Ecclesiastes is by no means isolated or quite exceptional. In our own time one thinks of A. E. Housman, who occupied the chair of Latin at Cambridge University with such brilliant distinction. One must remember, of course, that he had a wicked wit. (A critic once wrote of him as the first scholar in Europe. Housman's comment was that it was not true, and if it were, the critic who had expressed the judgment would not know it.) But deeper than this play of malicious irony which flashed like lightning there was for all his learning and his immense mental power a strange and distinguished pessimism which gives one a deep and dark sense of frustration. Again and again the mood is expressed in verses of singular and poignant power.

I promise nothing; friends will part;
All things may end, for all began;
And truth and singleness of heart
Are mortal even as is man.

* * * * *

June suns, you cannot store them
To warm the winter's cold,
The lad that hopes for heaven
Shall fill his mouth with mould.

* * * * *

All knots that lovers tie
Are tied to sever;
Here shall your sweet-heart lie,
Untrue forever.

A contemporary of A. E. Housman, who won spectacular fame in the field of action, was at heart an intellectual of cultivated and delicately sensitive intelligence, whose very exquisiteness of organization produced pain and the sense of inner frustration. Perhaps the whole tale of the inner life of Lawrence of Arabia will never be told. But we know enough to be sure that in a sense his particular quality of intelligence betrayed him. It did not lead him to satisfaction or to peace.

In America Henry Adams is (what he would have particularly disliked to be called) a dramatic example of the intelligence which leads to frustration. His famous book, *The Education of Henry Adams,* is the autobiography of a man who with all his highly integrated intelligence became an incarnate frustration. He judged a century with mordant and almost cruel insight. But he never learned how to judge Henry Adams.

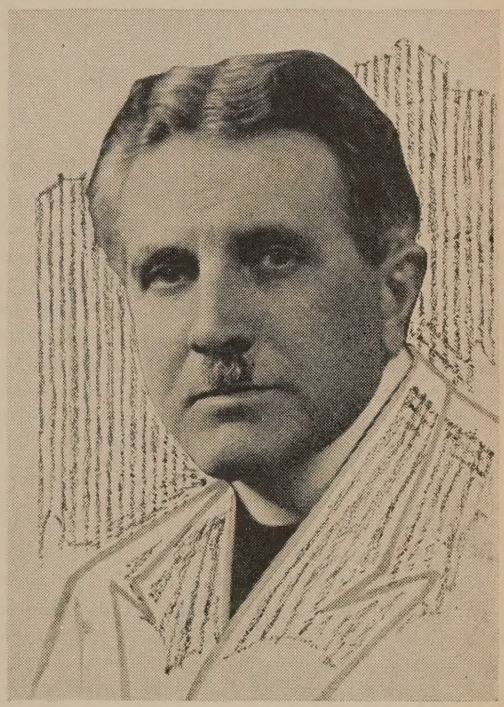
The curious phenomenon of the decadence of the intellectual is in its own way one of the most significant aspects of life—perhaps particularly of contemporary life.

II

On the other hand, there is the glorious phenomenon of the vital confidence of the intellectual. One thinks at once, among men recently potent in the life and thought of the world, of Arthur Balfour. He moved in a circle of the most sophisticated intellectuals. He had wit as well as intelligence. And he was able to turn his mind into a sword which moved with a facility whose grace was only equaled by its deadly execution. He used all this keen and disciplined mental power to fight on the side of the angels. He could be as wittily keen in defending the eternal values as some of his contemporaries were in attacking them. You might perhaps accuse him at times of self-consciousness and it may be of just a touch of intellectual snobbishness. You would never accuse him of being decadent.

Going back a little in time you come upon a personality richer and more robust than that of Balfour with a certain rugged masterfulness of mind. It is easy to criticize Robert Browning. That mind "hydropic with a sacred thirst" for all kinds of knowledge, that exhaustless capacity for fascinated interest in all the ways of thinking and feeling and acting of this strange creature man, could be caught in the rush of a passion in which critical intelligence seemed swept aside. But Robert Browning always used his mind, even when he was most intensely responsive to vivid experience. And so his belief in life, his belief in God and his flashing and commanding sense of the mastery of Christ, spoke with contagious power to his generation. He helped men and women to believe in an abundant life.

Going back still farther—much farther—one finds a superb and in a sense defining example of the vital confidence of the intellectual. The dialogues of Plato always tantalize and astonish us. He knows everything that men think and feel and experience. He is frank and unhesitating in his gaze upon life, in a fashion which is startling even in this age which so often confuses the nude with the real. But always his eyes rise. And it is the vision of the heights which holds his attention. Like quicksilver his mind plays about every thought and experience of which man is capable. Then his whole mind seizes the white and stainless beauty of the ideal



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and holds it fast. And so confident and assured he stands with eternal sunlight shining in his eyes.

III

Is our intelligence to end in frustration? Is our intelligence to be illuminated by faith and hope and love? It is of course Christianity which gives the final answer to that question. And it comes to us in the words of Jesus, "I came that they may have life and may have it abundantly." For one of the most tremendous achievements of Jesus was the salvation of the intelligence. You never understand Christianity until you come to know that it does not come to be judged by the mind. Rather it comes to remake the mind. Or, to put the matter more adequately, Jesus Christ creates the type of mind capable of judging Christianity.

This insight of course requires humility. Perhaps the final judgment regarding men like Housman and Lawrence and Henry Adams is that they possessed every

intellectual virtue except that ultimate humility which is capable of recognizing a truth before which it must bow in self-forgetful awe. Neitzsche is said to have cried out once in a moment of almost startling self-revelation: "I cannot believe in God, because if there were a God I should have to be He."

Jesus brings a moral and spiritual discipline to the intelligence which enables it to believe in that which is greater than itself. And when a man has that experience he can indeed inherit the earth. The hour when a man is delivered from self-consciousness is the hour when with a deeper meaning than the Count of Monte Cristo put into the words he can cry, "The world is mine." The abundant life belongs to the man who loses himself in loyal and adoring acceptance of that which is eternally greater than himself. Such a man comes to have eyes which can really see Jesus Christ. Such a man attains that singleness of attention, that purity of heart —to use the great old phrase, which enables him to see God.

IV

It is along these lines that the men of our own day can meet the dilemma presented by the intelligence which leads to frustration and the intelligence which leads to faith. We never turn pessimists because of anything which happens to us. We never turn pessimists because of anything which happens to the world. Only something which happens in us leads to decadence. Only something which happens in us leads to the abundant life. Only something which happens in us turns intelligence to moral understanding and to spiritual security. It was a momentous realization of this which led Paul to cry: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Jesus foretold the abundant life. It was not promise but fulfillment, which led Paul to write: "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Here intelligence comes to the realization of that abundant life which is Christianity.

One can put it quite simply by saying that the winds which filled Paul's sails still blow and will fill our sails today.

The Only Path to Peace

There exists in practically every land, and in some lands to a very large and influential extent, a deep-seated popular sentiment against war.

The reason why this strong and widely distributed popular sentiment counts for so little in controlling public policy is that for the most part it contents itself with emotional outgivings and outbursts. It is opposed to war; it will not countenance war; it will take no part in war; it will permit no one to make economic gain out of war; but it is singularly hopeless and helpless when confronted with the task: first, of lessening and then removing the causes of war, and second, of building up those public institutions of cooperation and judicial process which are the only possible substitute for war.

Nicholas Murray Butler.

Doing the Best Things In the Worst Times

By William A. Keith

And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him. . . . Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. Luke 23:33, 34.

Civilizations seem to experience the ebb and flow of spiritual and cultural tides. The tide goes out carrying with it great faiths and creative enthusiasms. Then in those little harbors on the shore of the sea of life where men once looked out to far, clear horizons there is revealed the slimy, spawning, precipitate from which corruption begets its kind.

Such a time was the seventeenth century in England. The tide was out. It was not to return until it came with John Wesley and the romantic poets. The *Cambridge Modern History* says of the age: "The masses were ignorant and brutalized . . . the governing class intent only on pleasure and politics, the church chiefly occupied with patronage and controversy." Mark Pattison further characterizes the age as "one of decay of religion, licentiousness of morals, public corruption, profaneness of language . . . an age destitute of depth and earnestness; an age whose poetry was without romance, whose philosophy was without insight, and whose public men were without character."

Against that background put this—the inscription on a memorial tablet in an English church in Leicestershire: "In the year 1653 when all things sacred were, throughout the nation, either demolished or profaned, Sir Robert Shirley, Baronet, founded this Church, whose singular praise it is to have done the best things in the worst times, and hoped them in the most calamitous."

Like the face in a Rembrandt portrait which shines the brighter because of its dark background, so does Sir Robert Shirley in the seventeenth century. He did "the best things in the worst times and hoped them in the most calamitous."

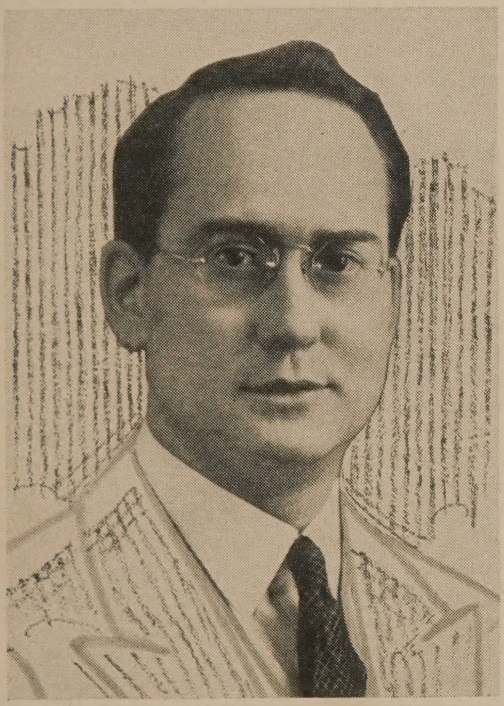
OUR WORLD OF TODAY

It would not be difficult to find significant parallels between that century and our own. Public and private irresponsibility, widespread cynicism, and a church lacking adequate vitality belong to both. The tragedy of our age is vividly set forth in a recent report of the Federal Council of Churches wherein it is declared:

"We recognize the difficulty of this age, its perplexity, futility and wrongness in many areas of life. We are faced with the constant threat of war. . . . All about us in the social order we look out upon evils of political corruption in civic affairs, upon unemployment, strikes and unrest in industry, upon class hatred and suspicion, upon seeming conflict of interest between agriculture and industry, and upon racial discrimination with its resulting bitterness. Our age seems proverbial for lawlessness and crime and the evils of lynching flame into new brutality. Business integrity has been found lack-

ing in high places and gangsters terrorize our cities." The report further notes: "The wrongness of our age finds expression on the personal level in the lapse into alcoholism and in the rising tide of gambling. . . . In the background, but even more sinister, lurk the pessimistic or cynical complacency and indifference with which too many men . . . seem to view vast and corroding wrongs. Surely the world appears to be adrift upon a sea of confusion and futility, with no sure chart or compass and the pirates seeking to take command."

One cannot view such a scene, with which his personal destiny and that of his children is so intimately related, and not feel deep concern, even alarm. Unless he is so much a part of it as to be insensitive to its



William A. Keith

wrongs or is so despairing as to believe catastrophe inevitable, then he will mightily want to do something about it. He will want to take hold somewhere. But what shall he do and where shall he take hold?

Before much of any consequence can be done about it there will need to be a widespread awakening as to the peril and a renewal of conviction as to personal responsibility. How much some of us would like to storm the Bastilles of our social wrongs and participate even in a new age of Puritanism if that meant personal rectitude and private righteousness! How much some of us would welcome a new age of faith and a revival of high ethical religion! But such a spiritual and moral awakening will tarry long unless some persons make way for it. Great movements are never launched by those who wait for others to act. When has any wrong ever been righted until some individuals, without waiting to see what others would do, have themselves done something? When has spiritual vitality ever been let loose in the world until some persons said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord"? When has there ever come a new sense of the consequence of personal commitments until some individuals began doing the best things in the worst times?

You cannot read the history of the early Christian church without feeling the enormous significance of a minority group whose individuals had made personal commitments. In one of the decadent ages of history when old foundations were giving way they were fashioning new foundations. They even lived through a time of chaos with stout hearts and calm eyes because they believed that even the destruction that came upon their age was the judgment of God. One of their own number confidently wrote that all things were being shaken in order "that those things which cannot be shaken may remain."

For the most part they were people of little consequence—"not many wise, not many mighty and not many noble." I am always struck by a phrase in Paul's letter written from Rome to the church at Philippi. Among the salutations at the close is this: "All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household." Doubtless they were slaves doing menial tasks for the very representatives of a government they despised, and they lived among a people who considered them a queer and fanatical sect. But their queerness was their uniqueness. Not being able to separate themselves from their "present world" they were resolved to keep themselves "unspotted from the world." They believed there was a meaning in history; that Christ being the first-born among many brethren they were called to be of his spiritual family; that God was not dead and they could count on his judgment and his mercy.

INDIVIDUAL COMMITMENT NECESSARY

The emphasis upon the social gospel has been one of the achievements of our time. We have come to a realization that religion means something for all areas of our life; that you can't have it compartmentalized. We believe that "if religion ends with the individual, then it ends." But it is equally true that unless religion begins with the individual it does not begin. Personal commitment is the beginning of all vital religion. When the Philippian jailor cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" he received the answer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." That Paul's answer urged something more than ascent to a dogma about the person and work of Jesus is in the very background of the Christian community. Because they believed in Jesus Christ they set themselves against a world that repudiated him and made a personal commitment to his way of life.

This congregation could be easily persuaded, indeed is already persuaded, that the universal acceptance of the spirit of Christ, his attitudes, his way of seeing life, his way of living is desirable for all mankind. But is there one to say, "Here and now, God helping me, I commit myself to his way of life"? Christian discipleship calls for nothing less. Nor will his kingdom come in the world until there are enough such personal commitments.

The "singular praise" of Sir Robert Shirley was that in a time "when all things sacred were throughout the nation, either demolished or profaned," he took personal

responsibility upon himself. Whenever any person acts upon that principle he finds it isn't nearly as much a personal decision as he thought. He who does the worst or he who does the best isn't just living his own life. He is letting loose in the world either the forces of integration or those of disintegration. That being true, our lives are not our own to do with as we please. They are our own to do with as we ought. I don't know what happened in Leicestershire because of Sir Robert Shirley but from what I know of other men who have nailed some such purpose to their masthead, I believe there came into that community a cleansing spiritual tide and many men through his influence felt a morally bracing salt sea breeze.

It interests me that he was a baronet. He was as we say "one of the best people." He was "at the top." He had social position and political influence. In a democracy where one man's vote counts as much as another's we are rightly concerned about what the masses are going to do. But at the last the masses are going to do about what the people at the top do. There may be no distinction with the heavenly hosts over the bodily estate of repentant sinners and as notable as is the purpose of the Salvation Army to reach the "down and outs" one has great sympathy with the purpose of the Oxford Group Movement to reach the "up and outs."

The responsibility for this world rests finally upon the people of privilege like Sir Robert Shirley, those who have drunk long draughts from the cup of education, family background and fortunate circumstance and whose very position make them count as more than one man. They are not to control it by force, for that is Fascism; but by influence, which is Christianity. We will never root out of society the widespread attitude of regarding life as a racket in which every man works some scheme regardless of its social good unless we get enough people at the top of society who have a sense of social responsibility. We will never root out of our life a practical materialism with people living beyond their means unless there are people of wealth who make no vulgar display of it. We will never have respect for law and nonviolence among laborers until we cease to have terrorism and espionage on the part of industrialism. We will never have life taken in high seriousness by all the people unless the best people repudiate shallow and superficial ways of living.

Sir Robert Shirley, *Baronet,* took upon himself responsibility for his age and did the best things in the worst times.

HE FOUNDED A CHURCH!

Admitting that it may be idealizing him out of all proportion to the facts, which are not at hand, I would like to think he was one of those wise men who saw the desperate need of his age and did what?—founded a church! He might have founded an anti-saloon league since every sixth shop in London was a public house and signs invited the poor to get drunk for a penny or dead drunk for two pence. He might have founded a workers' party since there were many whose economic condition was serfdom. Since ignorance was widespread and one of the causes of degradation, he might have founded a "ragged school" or a college. Or he might have founded a humane society since cock-fighting and bull-baiting were favorite brutal sports.

Instead he founded a church, because, as I would like to believe, he saw that if the spirit of Christ was widely sown, year after year, there would come humanitarian and philanthropic movements. It is not without significance that such causes have on their directorates and receive their support almost wholly from those on the rolls of churches. Such humanitarian movements know they will find in the churches sensitive consciences.

Imperfect though it is, the church still represents the largest body of organized idealism to be found anywhere. Nor is it without significance that in countries like those of the Scandinavian peninsula, Great Britain and the United States where ethical religion has had its best chance, you do not find Fascism and Communism with their denial of civil rights. The words of John Henry Newman have been vindicated by history: "Not a man in Europe now, who talks bravely against the church, but owes it to the church, that he can talk at all." The one group that has not yet been silenced in Germany is the voice raised by the Protestant Confessional Church.

A REVELATION OF GOD NEEDED

Civilization needs the church to make sensitive hearts, expansive minds and ready hands. It needs the church to stand above the narrow provincialism of race and class and say, "One is your father." It needs the church to assure men living in desperate times, who are themselves out to some battle for good causes, that God himself "will not fail nor be discouraged until he hath set justice in the earth." And it needs a voice to say to men and women who are weary in well-doing, "Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

Surely, Sir Robert Shirley, in choosing to do the best things in the worst times was living on the side of God. Whether you think of deity in terms of Bergson's "élan vital" or Wieman's "process of integration" or in the older symbolism of Genesis with its worlds being formed or the new heaven and the new earth of the Revelation, the idea is that of God working as creator with nature and human nature.

In Marc Connelly's "Green Pastures," that powerful and appealing drama using the folklore of a race as the vehicle for deep spiritual truth, God is shown ever brooding over humanity which he has placed upon the earth. In utter disgust over their waywardness he decides once to wipe them out with the flood and begin anew. They again follow the same downward path so he destroys Sodom by fire and calls out the family of Abraham to "seek a city whose builder and maker is God." Driven to despair and with heavy heart he finally resolves not on destruction or rejection but upon appeal—resolves to send his own son into the world in order that the world through him might be saved. Off stage, in the drama, a voice is heard: "Look, they're going to make him carry a cross."

It was from that cross that one whom men have chosen to call the Son of God in a way they have never spoken of any other, said: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Surely God was there, doing the best thing in the worst time.

The Day After

By Frederick H. Knubel

THE day after, "the cold gray dawn of the morning after"—only then can actions be properly judged. The applause and the sneers of men today for my deeds have no final meaning. A tree is known by its fruits, the fruits it will bear tomorrow, and not by its leafiness today. The life and death of Jesus appeared as a mistake and as a tragedy until the day after, the third day after, when in the resurrection the meaning and the power of that life and death were released. The value of present American policies, the meaning of present world confusion will be determined—tomorrow.

Something else is important. The worth of my actions is measured, not only by what others think of them tomorrow, but by what I myself think of them that day. The headaches the day after have a story to tell. My vain thoughts tomorrow will ruin my heroism today. My blunders and iniquities become sources of power if, the day after, an inspired repentance and new wisdom become mine.

All this is illustrated in an unexpected place, the fine parable of the Good Samaritan. We forget that the action in that story covers two days. The record of it contains these significant words, "on the morrow." It is worth while to consider what some of its characters were thinking of their actions the day after.

I

Note, for instance, that priest and Levite who left the wounded man by the road and passed by on the other side. What were their thoughts the next day? We suppose that the incident never crossed their minds again. They had many duties and forgot it. But not if they were like us, when we have omitted to do a good deed. Always we begin to excuse ourselves, to justify ourselves for the neglect. The story tells us that the first man saw the wounded traveler, the second even went to look at him before passing by. After that they could not easily forget. Above all Jesus told this parable to a lawyer who was trying to justify himself.

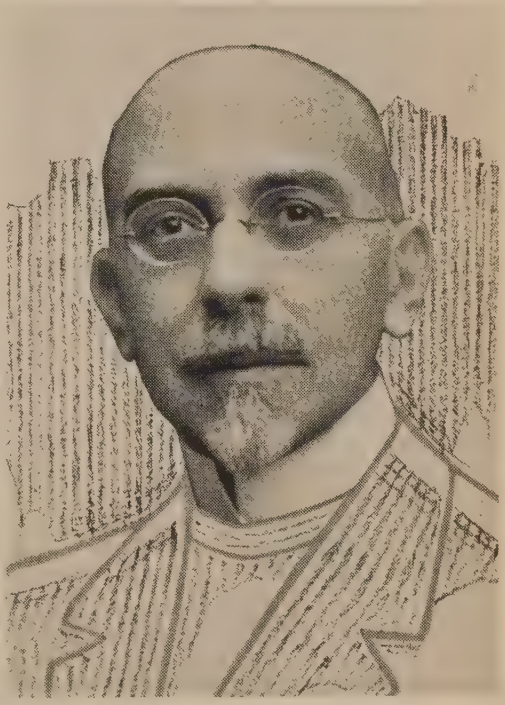
There we are, that priest and that Levite and I, forever justifying ourselves when we neglect some opportunity for good. We argue with conscience and screw it into agreement. All we desire is to be right in our own eyes, though the heavens fall. We put ourselves on trial, and are the whole court—judge, jury, both attorneys, and the only witnesses. Naturally we are acquitted, that priest and that Levite and I, and then only can we forget.

But what happens in our minds through this habit of forced self-approval? Faulty judgment, warped consciences, hypocrisy, easy condemnation of others in order ourselves to be guiltless, and then the horror of human prejudices. This is true not only for individuals, but for nations and for races. National self-justifications are a primary cause of war. Harold Nicolson, in his *Reminiscences of the Paris Peace Conference,* keenly reveals the universal tendency to blame others, those wicked or stupid others, for every failure of the Versailles Treaty. Those others are the capitalists, the militarists, the idealists, the older generation, the press, the masses, and every nation except our own.

As a further consequence, the man who justifies himself thinks he needs no religion, and cannot have religion. Notice Micah's triple definition of religion: "To do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." Those closing words, "with thy God," belong to each item. The first is therefore, "to do justly with thy God." Religion means, not to be right in my own eyes, but under the clear eyes of him who knows what is in me—not to justify, but to be justified by him. I hear Jesus say, "Ye are they which justify themselves before men; but God knoweth your heart."

II

Returning to the parable, what was the wounded man thinking the day after, in bed at the inn where the



Frederick H. Knubel

Samaritan brought him? Was he condemning those who passed by? He was unconscious at the roadside, and knew nothing of them. The story itself indicates his mood. He had possessions, for he was robbed. He had put up a good fight, for he was badly wounded, half dead. He had gone down a dangerous road alone, believing he could care for himself. We see the picture of a self-reliant man. Having been worsted, he felt humiliated the day after. He was humbled chiefly because of the type of man who helped him, a Samaritan, one whom Jews then despised. If his pain and weakness permitted, he was tossing on his bed that second day. He was annoyed that he had got into a plight where he needed help from others and where he had received it from one he would not even recognize.

And so we have the mirror held up to our own lives once more. Quite as common as self-justification is

self-sufficiency. We make a hard lesson out of the willingness to receive help and rarely learn how to accept it gracefully. Jesus says, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." We interpret those words as saying that to receive is no blessing at all. He says merely that to give is *more* blessed. All the while we are missing the fundamental fact, the fundamental principle of life, namely dependence on other lives. Life originates from other lives, cannot continue without still others (including Samaritans), and has its inevitable goal in the life of God.

Once more also we are faced with a supreme danger in the world's life today—the self-sufficiency of nations. "Exaggerated nationalism" seems to be the chapter heading for this period of history. We Americans have our part in the common guilt. Yet war is on the way and international peace cannot abide unless nations know their dependence upon one another—including Samaritans.

Again likewise we recognize the nature of true religion. Micah has it, "To do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." "Walk humbly with thy God." Humbly—that is utter dependence. Walk—that means continuance daily. *Thy* God—that is possession of him and by him.

III

And now the Samaritan himself. What was he thinking the day after? With fine tact he did not intrude on the sick man, whose antipathy to him he knew. He asked the host to care for the invalid and promised full payment on return. The host trusted him, clearly knowing his man and recognizing that the act of kindness was nothing unusual in that man's life. So the Samaritan departed and beyond a sympathetic prayer for the man in bed, never gave another thought to what had occurred. He was the only man in the story who was not thinking about it the second day—because it was nothing unusual in his life.

And this is the truly merciful man—not he who sometimes performs acts of strained, ostentatious philanthrophy; not he who counts to himself his good deeds and thanks God he is not like other men; but he who is unconscious that he has done anything unusual, to whom mercy has become second nature. I say second nature purposely, for it is not original human nature to possess such a spirit. There is One, the original Good Samaritan, who (to borrow Stanley Jones' figure) is the Christ of all the world's roads. With his oil and wine and beast he travels the ways where the self-justifying, self-sufficient men are found. He has revealed mercy to the world, has given God's mercy to men. He imparts it, as a new, a second nature to his followers.

This also is true religion. How wonderfully Micah's definition fits this parable! The remaining clause in that definition is "to love mercy—to love mercy with thy God." Religion is not merely merciful deeds. It is the love of mercy, a heart within filled with delight in mercy. Religion is more, for it is to love mercy *with thy God.*

It is the discovery that Christ has brought the prevailing power of redemptive mercy into the world, and to be identified in that mercy with him.

The Stewardship of Time

By Victor M. Rhein

So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Psalm 90:12.

THUS did the Psalmist—in the words of our text—give expression to the stewardship of time. Thus did the Psalmist realize the brevity of a man's life. Carlyle spoke of "our life—a little gleam of time between two eternities"; in a similar vein of thought the Psalmist gives counsel that life is short and not a matter with which one has a right to trifle.

We have spent a lot of time and thought talking about the stewardship of money. Most of us have to budget our income very carefully in order to keep the sheriff from the door. But how little thought we give to the stewardship of time! In this realm most of us are spendthrifts. With what prodigality we waste our moments in riotous living! Merely because our purse is magically filled each day with twenty-four golden hours, we forget the value of time. Yet remember, here is the greatest democracy—the democracy of time—yet achieved by the Creator of the universe. The genius and the moron have the same twenty-four hours in their day. Death, in time, takes both—their days are numbered—but what difference the two have made of their "three score years and ten"!

We mortals are transient beings in an eternal universe. We come as pilgrims into the universe. We may, or we may not, leave our footprints on the sands of time. We may "fly forgotten as a dream," and the "human time" of which we are a part may close its eyelids and "be gathered like a scroll within the tomb, unread forever." "Like an ever rolling stream," time may bear her sons away. Like the grass of the field, we may spring up in the morning and by evening be cut down.

Yet, all this having been said, we do not acquiesce in stupidity. We mortal beings, living in the midst of a "river of passing events," whose current is strong, are given minds which have the capacity to transcend time. The mind is not bound by space and time. We live a quality of eternity here in the midst of time. This capacity to overspan and rise above time is our experience of eternity. "Eternity," says Rufus M. Jones, "is the experience of holding and possessing in one moment the here and now, the past and the present and that which is to come."

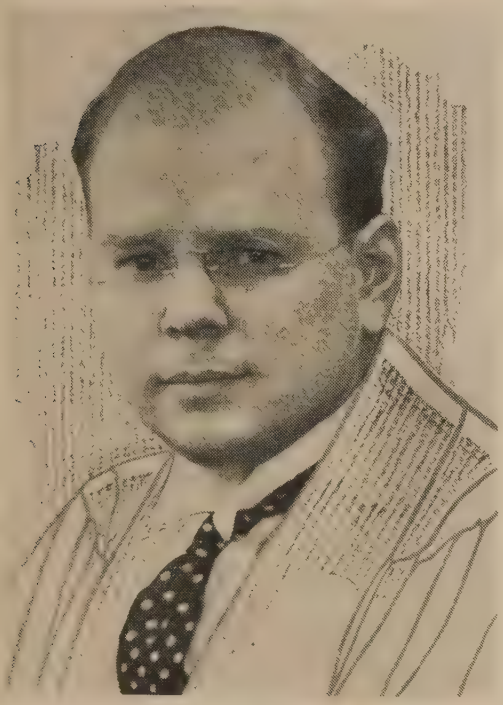
The Psalmist, realizing all the transient features of this mortal life, cognizant of the fact that "we spend our years as a tale that is told," yet prays that we may learn to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

I

For one thing, the Psalmist is saying that time is not a thing with which we dare to trifle. To trifle with time is to trifle with life, for time is "the stuff of which life is made." Goethe once said: "It is better to do the most trifling thing in the world for half an hour than to think

that half an hour is a trifling thing." Aristotle, in his "Theophrastus," makes the chief character repeat one of the author's favorite expressions—that "time is the most valuable thing a man can spend."

But most of us do not spend time. We waste it. We deal with our minutes as if they were coins. Our time cannot be saved. It must be spent. While it is true that at each dawn our purse is magically filled with twenty-four golden hours, the opposite of that is also true—that at the end of each day the purse is empty whether the moments are spent or not. The great mistake most of us make is in acting and thinking as if "one moment could always be substituted for another." We must



VICTOR M. RHEIN

discover the uniqueness of the present moment. Not one moment of the past can be recovered in terms of really living it over. How often we may wish it could! Here is Elizabeth Akers Allen, crying to time:

> Backward, turn backward, O Time in your flight!
> Make me a child again, just for tonight!

But no amount of passionate appeal to time will ever induce it to turn back and make us children, even for a night. Those golden moments of the past are gone.

The pathos of the mind which trifles with time is this: That the past seems golden and the future luring. The present in which the trifling mind lives is dull. But we must realize that the past is the present gone by and the future is soon to be the present. We dare not run the risk of trifling with one moment of the present. Meister Eckhart used to say, "He who stands continually in the present *now,* in him God the Father begets his Son without ceasing." Time is not a thing with which man can afford to trifle. "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

II

For another thing, one might indirectly gather from what the Psalmist suggests that time is a relative thing. It is the application of our hearts unto wisdom which transforms our days from dull routine—what Anker Larson, the Danish novelist, calls "asthmatic gasping"—to the higher level of deeds, thoughts and feelings, which give life the zest of the noble characters.

> We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
> In feelings, not in figures on the dial.
> We should count time by heart-throbs when they beat
> For God, for men, for duty.
> He most lives who thinks most, feels noblest, acts the best.

Too many people are prone to think of time in terms of the mechanical methods by which it is measured—seconds, minutes, hours, days, years, centuries. Man needs some form of computation, to be sure. But when he becomes lost in that estimate of life which proceeds upon mere mechanical computation he loses the nobler part of his judgment. How often we speak of the length of a man's service without any respect to its fruitfulness and effectiveness! Often we find business firms using the length of a man's service as the basis for honorable discharge and claims of gratitude. It is true, as Professor Hocking has said—"Antiquity is all but equivalent to sanctity."

We do not speak disparagingly of this tendency. Yet it is an inadequate standard for the judgment of time. Many people live more in a minute than we live in an hour. Jesus, dying at the age of thirty-three, had lived more of life than the most antique and doty Pharisee. And which of us, if given the freedom of choice, would not choose to live in a few short years the mental and spiritual richness of Jesus' life as contrasted with the "asthmatic gasping" of a Pharisee? It is not always the duration of life that serves as the criterion for judging the time one has lived, but the quality of life which one lives.

III

Another thing which one might infer from the Psalmist's idea of time is the fact that it is a vindication of man's life and his work. That is to say, a man may be working for a cause which is not achieved in his lifetime. He may go to a martyr's grave. But time vindicates his life and his work. Jesus could say, "It is finished"—meaning, if divorced from theological interpretation, that his dream would possibly perish from the earth. Judas had betrayed him; Peter had denied him; his family had misunderstood him; his friends had forsaken him. He died without the faintest realization of his vision. Yet time has vindicated him and continues to do so. One could almost multiply by infinity the men and women for whom this fact has been true.

The opposite of this fact is also true. Men who are popularly acclaimed by their contemporaries as the messiahs of their day but who are working against history, are indicted by time. Men see how fraudulent their lives and works were. One of the most perfect literary illustrations of this fact is a few lines—poetical, to be sure, but nonetheless real—from Anderson's *Mary of Scotland.* Mary Stuart has been interred in prison by the capricious, political intrigue of Elizabeth Tudor.

Mary has been requested to abdicate her right to the crown, which she refuses to do. Because of her refusal Elizabeth keeps her interred and from year to year puts her

> From one cell to another, step lower always,
> Till you reach the last, forgotten, forgotten of men,
> Forgotten among causes, a wraith that cries
> To fallen gods in another generation
> That's lost your name.

Mary then makes reply in these memorable lines:

> And suppose indeed you won
> Within our lifetime, still looking down from the heavens
> And up from men around us, God's spies that watch
> The fall of great and little, they will find you out—
> I will wait for that, wait longer than a life,
> Till men and time unscroll you, study the tricks
> You play, and laugh, as I shall laugh, driven
> To death, to exile by you, unjustly . . .
> Win now, take your triumph now.
> For I'll win men's hearts in the end—though the sifting takes
> This hundred years—or a thousand.

Any of you who have ever tramped the Scottish and English countrysides and walked their city streets will know how true it is that Mary won the hearts of men.

There have always been some men ahead of their time. Man may not understand them any more than their spiritual ancestors have been understood. They always run the danger of martyrdom. But at those points wherein they were right they are vindicated by time. William E. Gladstone, defeated in the House of Commons on a great issue, said: "I appeal to time." Robert Browning appealed to time for the vindication of his theory of poetry. Elizabeth Barrett Browning died without seeing the world's vindication of the confidence she held in her husband's genius. But the time came.

Browning himself could make his grammarian say:

> Leave now to dogs and apes!
> Man has forever.

It was that which George Washington seems to have meant when in a letter to Sally Fairfax written in his sixty-sixth year, he spoke of "Time, that faithful expositor of all things." I should not be surprised that when the Psalmist speaks of the establishment of "the work of our hands upon us" he means something of the same thing. "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

IV

If what we have thus far said is true there is only one conclusion to be drawn. We must, in the phrase of Longfellow, "be up and doing." One may sympathize with William Morris who said:

> Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due time,
> Why should I strive to get the crooked straight?

Or one may feel with Hamlet:

> The time is out of joint: O cursed spite,
> That ever I was born to set it right!

Yet, one who is a true steward of time, one who does not trifle with the present, but who is not afraid to wait for time to vindicate his vision, must always "be up and doing" in the endeavor to set things right. But here is exactly where the subtle temptation to procrastinate, quietly and serpent-like, makes its voice heard. Man cannot swim against the current. Time is a strong current of events. Drift with it. Do not be foolish enough to think that you can pull against it!

Madach, the Hungarian dramatist, in his "The Tragedy of Man," gives us a perfect illustration of this demonic temptation to procrastinate. Adam in converse with Lucifer (Satan) relates that he possesses a secret voice which tells him he has "been chosen to rebuild this age!" It is the same inner compulsion which the prophets and martyrs of all ages have felt. It is also the feeling of Hamlet. Any man feeling that his time is out of joint feels also an inner compulsion to set it aright. But listen to Lucifer's version:

> Idle ambition! For no man can fight
> Against the spirit of the age that bore him.
> It's a stream, that drags one on, or drowns one:
> A man may swim with it, but he cannot stem it.
> Those whom the chronicles acclaim as great
> Were men who know and understood their times,
> But never had engendered new ideas.

On the contrary, Mr. Lucifer, the men "whom the chronicles acclaim as great" are those who have engendered new ideas. The only answer to Lucifer is that of Jesus: "My Father worketh even until now, and I work." So long as our universe is incomplete we must work with God in its completion.

> Let thy work appear unto thy servants,
> And thy glory upon their children.
> And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us;
> And establish the work of our hands upon us;
> Yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

Our time, O Eternal, is within Thy hands. "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

Dead End

By John W. Cyrus

DEAD END is where a street in a great American metropolis, teeming with all the forms of beaten and degraded humanity of a great city, runs dead against the rotting wooden piles and wharves that keep it from crawling its crowded way out into the river; where those same piles and wharves keep the river, swirling its brown, oily, skin of refuse toward the sea, from soaking its slime utterly into the already unbearable life of the street.

Dead End is where two kinds of life brazenly push their backs against each other; where million dollar apartments push their way through moldering tenements to make million dollar yachts accessible to their rear entrances; where the windows of these same dwellings look at each other across narrow, cavernous alleys, one kind with the glance of cultivated aloofness, the other with the sinister glance of dark and profane mockery.

Dead End is where boys swim in the brown depths of the river, roast mickeys over fires made of discarded

orange crates, fight over the treasures filched from the dirty possessions of the street, talk in their ingenuous gutter jargon, enforce their code with cruel penalties, and plan their delicious gang atrocities to be perpetrated against newcomers, other gangs and the children of the rich apartments.

Dead End is where a killer comes back to his old neighborhood after seven years' absence to see his old lady again, and to look up his illicit youthful love. Dead End is where those who have fought against the street with an incredible idealism have tried to change it or leave it and found themselves unwanted in a world where there are already too many striving people, have been sucked back into it again to subside or live alone in their dead dreams.

But Dead End, a place made of the contradictions of filthy poverty and defensive wealth, a scene that shelters and defeats the human life it spawns, is still a place full of life, a setting whose significance is dwarfed by the intense brief interludes of the very lives it makes and breaks. Dead End though it may be, each bit of its life clings to its rotten foundations with a valid and justifiable claim to the right to endure as it is able.

A PICTURE OF LIFE TODAY

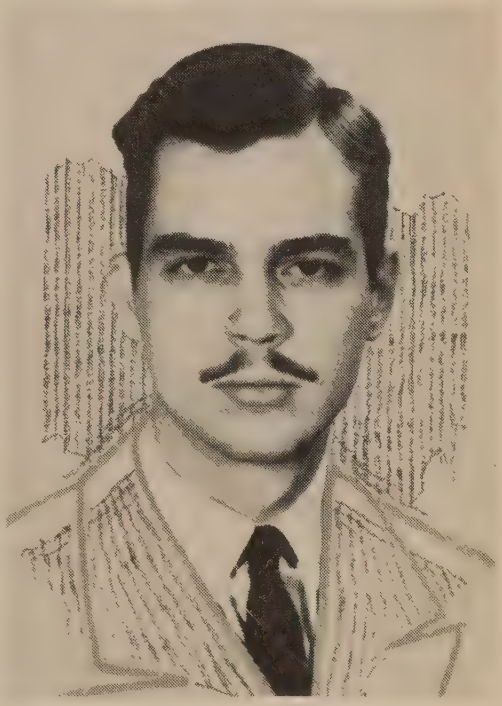
It does not need to be said that "Dead End" is a motion picture recently popular in our theaters which depicts an authentic bit of life in the scene we have described. It is a motion picture based on a play of the same name which some universal law, whether of duty, human sympathy, the impulse to find and face reality, or simply of curiosity, should impel every person to see. But it is more than a motion picture or a drama.

It is an authentic picture of life. It is a picture of the social truth that when two such opposite extremes of human society are brought close together they bring out and emphasize the worst of each other and display the worst of themselves. Human society thus constituted tends to fall apart, or to store up explosive forces of hatred and enmity that will one day tear it apart. Because the street in front of the new River Terrace Apartments is being repaired, the rich renters are forced to come out by its rear entrance to reach their automobiles. But when they step into Dead End, their culture, which should be a liberating factor of their lives, becomes defensive, withdrawn, walking through filth with its skirts lifted, its nose sensitive, afraid of contamination. And the culture of the street which by itself shows a kind of gutter courage, a spirit fighting to maintain life against evil surroundings, becomes a destructive mockery of nice living.

SOCIETY AND INDIVIDUAL

In the presence of these extremes men become worse men than they would otherwise be. The inhabitants of the luxury apartments, revolted by the street, turn back to worship their possessions and justify their own lives in terms of them. The young mistress of a man who is separated from his wife chooses to maintain that relationship with him and enjoy his yacht and his comfort rather than to attempt an honest and real love with a struggling young architect and to endure the cockroaches that infest the floors of his tenement. The rich boy thinks he is a man because he can name all the presidents, speak French, and has a private pool instead of the river to swim in. His father, generous with his own son, demands the arrest of one of the street boys for drawing a knife on him and cutting his arm when he held the boy in a choking grip because the gang had beaten his son. The cop on the beat is compelled to hunt down the boy even though he knows it will mean reform school for him because the rich boy's father is a brother of a judge who can break the policeman's career and ruin his chances for promotion.

It is a picture of the social truth that these extremes of society represent centrifugal forces that tend to dominate the human scene and to render the ideal of a democratic society an impossible dream.



JOHN W. CYRUS

"Dead End" is also a picture of personal truth—the truth that personality cannot fight a successful fight against such overwhelming odds as Dead End presents. Religion, preaching, moral exhortation, psychiatry—no high words could stem the forces that prey upon people in Dead End. All these would be silly without the help of a changed environment. The killer comes back to his old neighborhood with the blood of seven men on his hands to see his mother. But when she meets him on the stairs she curses him, calls him a tramp, slaps him in the face, and tells him to get out and leave her alone. Not even the redemptive force of mother love can stand against the personal ravages of Dead End. When the same killer meets his boyhood sweetheart, she tells him she is physically wrecked. He asks her why she didn't starve first, and her reply is "Why didn't you?" Integrity isn't worth starving for at Dead End. The young architect who still keeps his integrity can't use it.

It is a picture of the truth that personality can start

off well and end badly. It may be true that you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear; it is also true that a silk purse won't last long in a sty. The rough code of honor which a boy learns in his gang is broken as he lives and learns. At first his gang agrees to fight another gang on even terms, meeting at a certain time, using only bare knucks and flat boards, no knives and no bats. Then they learn that the only point is to win, that if they arrive ahead of time, if they throw light bulbs and milk bottles, use socks filled with sand and rocks, and do a little cutting in the clinches, they'll be better off. They learn that the tips one can pick up at reform school are valuable and make stealing almost fool-proof. At Dead End personality starts off with a little hope, a little sense of fair play, a little tolerance, and ends with nothing.

DEAD END LIVING AND THE KINGDOM

"Dead End" is also a picture of spiritual truth. It is a picture of the spiritual truth that all the separate ways of men that seem right to those who follow them will end in the ways of death unless they can also see and move toward a way that is far more right than any they have yet known and lived by. That unless their devotion is to that way yet to be discovered, there is nothing to keep Dead End from becoming the true picture of all human society instead of the horrible accident of a dead-end street in a great city. Nothing, that is, but the hidden and inexorable wisdom of the universe itself that makes such a society too self-destructive to last. For the ways we live and faith we live for impinge upon each other and interfere with each other. When men hitch their wagons to the star of a faith in a real kingdom of God but live out their lives in the ways of the passing kingdoms of this world, their very faith will destroy them. The guilt of Dead End is upon every man who sets up his own accidental way of life as something to hold finally sacred and does not yet with God's own discontent believe in a still better way.

It is a picture of the spiritual truth that even at Dead End there are the life forces by which good worlds and good men are made if such can be made. They are the more conspicuous because they seem so insignificant against the background of its darkness. For how tenacious of life human life becomes in Dead End. How cruelly it enforces punishment against squealers with a knife gash across the cheek making the mouth look longer than it is. Only a faith which can see this life tenacity and trust it can bridge the chasms that Dead End opens between the many ways of men. Only the faith that can trust it and hold out to it a better Way than all ways can redeem it.

It is a picture of the spiritual truth that no man can do too much, give too much, live too much for what he represents who said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me." He cannot do enough to make that sense of life part of his very pulse in a world in which heavens and hells are seen to be so much more humanly intimate and near than ever they seemed; in a world where life and death rest on the balance of real human fates and we pause between breaths, fearful and uncertain as to where we should cast the weight of our lives.

Walking in the Truth

By J. H. Marion, Jr.

I have no greater joy than to know that my children walk in the truth. III John: 4.

Of all the recent discoveries of science, few are more spiritually significant than the discovery that w human beings are physically made to tell the truth. A psychologist has invented what we now know as the li detector. Attach this device to a man's body, ask him question, and if he does not tell the truth his bloo pressure will invariably rise and reveal his falsehood If he tells the truth, his blood pressure remains the same More and more the lie detector will be used in the solu tion of crimes, but to my mind its spiritual significanc far outweighs the practical. For it seems to establish th fact that Nature made us to be truthful beings. W cannot tell a lie without causing our very bodies to ac abnormally!

But if the truth *is* native to us and the most natura thing for us, it ought to be clear that many people ar abnormal and that we are living in a fairly abnorma civilization. To what extent do we honor the truth and in our various human relationships, walk in the truth We Americans, to be sure, may take some pride in ou unquestioned superiority over other nations in this mat ter. In India, for example, a man who will not li whenever lying means a personal advantage is looke upon as a fool; and in countless heathen lands that cyn ical attitude is widely prevalent. In so-called Christia America we have at least risen to the point of paying lip service to the truth, for no matter how gaily o cruelly we may deceive others we do put a high premium on a good reputation. As Dr. Edwin Slosson says, "Tel a man that he is an habitual drunkard, and he will grin accuse him of the grossest licentiousness, and he wil blush—with pride; but call him a liar, and you wil have to dodge." We want to be *known* as truthful anyway!

The practical realities, however, are so far from agreeing with that desire that we might well examine ourselves as honestly as we can. Severely as we con demn other sins and crimes, perhaps there is no virtue which we trifle with so carelessly as that of truthful ness. That our courts of justice, our politics, our busines life today are honeycombed with a variety of decep tions and falsehoods is an assertion that does not require detailed proof. If a man wants money, public office, o freedom from the law, there are thousands who consider it stupid to let truth stand in the way. The ninth com mandment, "Thou shalt not bear false witness," is in danger of becoming a dead letter, a sort of museum piece in the realm of morals.

Where this trend will lead us it is not hard to foresee Not only does it threaten to undermine personal char acter but also to pull down one of the strongest pillars of civilization—our faith in one another. One of the crying needs of our nation, therefore, would seem to be for a widespread rededication to the truth.

Just what, however, does devotion to the truth in volve? "I cannot tell a lie," George Washington is

reported to have said to his mother, and that cherry-tree legend, I suspect, has for many of us defined devotion to truth in terms too negative and narrow. Honoring the truth, as a matter of fact, means far more than telling the truth. Being loyal to truth means more than abstaining from deliberate falsehood. Perhaps nothing sums up our need better than the phrase of St. John when he said, "I have no greater joy than to know that my children walk in the truth."

Let us try then, as far as we can, to illuminate that phrase. What would it mean for a man to walk in the truth?

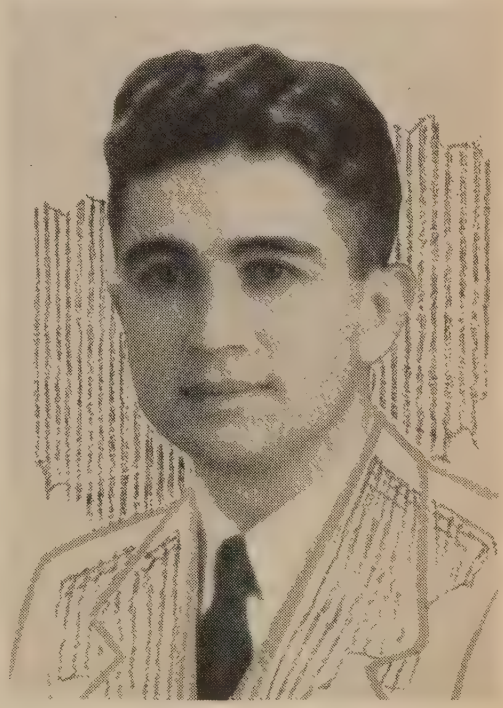
I

First of all, it means *refusing to let selfish personal advantage stand in the way of telling the truth.* Whether or not a lie is ever justifiable is a question frequently raised. Young people often bring it up in their discussion groups. Perhaps the question is prompted mainly by the realization that situations do arise in which an untruth seems to be the lesser of two evils. Here is a man, for example, on board a sinking ship. He sees a woman with a small child without a life preserver. He offers the woman his own. She refuses to take it and so endanger the man's life. Then he tells her that he can get another, knowing however that the supply has been exhausted. She takes the preserver and saves her life and that of her child. Was the man's gallant falsehood justified? One of my professors in college said of such a man, "He lied like a gentleman." Many authorities on ethics would agree with him. They say that in such cases, where deception is practiced for the protection of another's life or honor, from a purely unselfish motive, an untruth may be chosen as the lesser of two evils. The purpose and purity of the motive, that is to say, may wipe out the stain of the act.

Well, whether or not we agree with that, it ought to be clear that such untruths are not the heart problem for most of us. The common temptation for most of us is to use falsehoods for the saving of our own skins or the feathering of our own nests, and no one who does that can be described as walking in the truth. Abraham Lincoln, in one of his campaigns, once faced a situation where the concealment of a certain truth would have gained him many votes. He determined to reveal that truth in a speech. Many of his advisers warned him against it. But Lincoln said: "If it should be decreed that I should go down because of this speech, let me go down linked to the truth." Lincoln, you see, refused to let selfish personal advantage stand in the way of telling the truth, and in so doing he fulfilled one of the prime conditions of walking in the truth.

Is it too much to say, my friends, that high among our pressing social needs today is a revival of that kind of truth-telling? What we need are more politicians who will say, If I cannot win this election without misleading statements and concealments, let me go down linked to the truth! What we need are more businessmen who will say, If I cannot make more money without pasting false labels on my products, let me make less money and stay linked to the truth! What we need are more lawyers and court witnesses who will say, Even though accurate testimony does mean missing a bribe, let me have clean hands and be linked to the truth! For a prosperity based on lies not only cannot last but is not worth having. Elections won by frauds and falsehoods will rob men of the integrity that makes them trustworthy statesmen. Witness stands that are stained with perjuries will multiply crimes and make a mockery of justice. In the interest of decency and security, every loyal American would do well to fulfill this first condition of walking in the truth, which is simply telling the truth.

Even in our ordinary social intercourse, hard as it may be, we can make vast improvements. To be sure, we may not yet be ready to give up those little white lies and polite fictions which are almost demanded by the etiquette book. About many of those we are apt to feel



J. H. Marion, Jr.

as did the Irish girl who said to her lavishly admiring sweetheart, "I know ye're lying, Patrick, but I likes to hear ye just the same." Whether our friends or our husbands give us a strictly accurate opinion of our new spring bonnet does not greatly matter, so long as the estimate is pleasant! But what of those mean slanders and baser flatteries that spoil another's reputation or character? If as Christians we would walk in the truth, we will check up carefully on those ugly rumors before we toss them across the backyard fence. We will forego exaggerations and understatements by which we run other people down in order to minister to our own vanity.

II

In the second place, any man who would walk in the truth must strive, so far as he is able, concerning any situation, to *get the whole truth.* When a witness in court is made with his hand on the Bible to swear that he will tell "the whole truth," what does that part o

the oath mean? It does not mean, obviously, that he will tell the whole truth about everything, for no man knows that. It means that he binds himself to tell the whole truth about this particular matter, not hiding part of the story, not concealing pertinent facts, not clouding the issue by deceptive half-truths.

What a wholesome thing it would be if young people today made that same demand of their literary witnesses in the larger court of life! Reading many a modern novel, one cannot but gain a low opinion of life and people, and the worst of it is that so many books imply that this tawdry picture is the total picture! Of the latest novel by John Dos Passos, *The Big Money,* one critic says that there is not a single character in the book that you don't want to kick out of the house! Yet how many young people are swallowing such books as the last word about modern life! Probe deeply enough into anybody, imply these writers, and you will find him a rotter. Scratch the mahogany surface of civilization, and you find it's made of poplar! Look at life honestly, and you find it only a sordid pig-sty!

Well, what is wrong with that picture? The trouble can be stated simply. Such books are out of focus, so full of deceptive half-truths that one might well brand them a lie. The fact is, rottenness is not the only reality. Life does have a seamy side, but it's only one side. If some Harlem torch-singer is a reality, so is Kirsten Flagstad of the Metropolitan a reality. If the depravity of our racketeers is a reality, so also is the devotion of noble motherhood, the courageous idealism of the prophets, the stainless radiance of the Christ. Insist, then, upon the whole story! Refuse to wear blinkers or blinders. Before accepting any writer as an authority on life, see that he holds up his hand and says, "I solemnly swear to tell the truth—the whole truth." Then go on to see that only the better half of the truth is eternal truth, and determine to live in the light and under the guidance of those lasting realities! So alone can there come to God and your parents that supreme joy of knowing that their children "walk in the truth."

In all fairness, however, is it only young people today who are tempted to live by the flickering candlelight of half-truths? Regardless of our age, we all, I suspect, find it easy to make up our minds about vital issues on the basis of partial information. But before we can *speak* the truth, do we not first have to *know* the truth, the whole truth? Unless we are fully informed, properly educated about a subject, are we not apt to believe and to tell falsehoods about it? Surely so, and yet how many of us southerners try to speak the truth about the Negro and his needs when we have consulted only our own prejudices! How many of us fortunate middle-class folk try to tell the truth about the economic situation when we have consulted nothing but our private advantages! My friends, that is the kind of thing Hitler is doing! Hitler has decreed, in effect, that there is no such thing as objective truth: there is only nazi truth, nazi science, nazi ethics, nazi right and nazi wrong; and woe betide the university that says otherwise! Instead of conforming nazism to truth, Hitler conforms the truth to nazism.

Nor will you and I, personally, escape that same pitfall unless we try faithfully to get at least a cross-section of the whole truth. To know nothing but the facts that lie close about us, to shut our eyes to the other broader facts that stretch beyond our own walls—that will make even the most brilliant and kind-hearted people incapable of telling the truth about many of the crucial issues of our day. Ignorance may be bliss, but ignorance deliberately chosen in the face of accessible knowledge is a crime. Any Christian who would sincerely walk in the truth will realize that he must first, fairly, fully, know the truth.

III

In the third place, walking in the truth means *tolerating the truth,* listening to it and accepting it when we hear someone else tell it. That is perhaps the hardest stage of all, yet one of the most necessary. Did you ever stop to think that one reason why more truth is not told in the world may be that many of us do not want the truth told? How often doctors are impelled to mislead their patients, hide the truth from them, not because they want to, but because the patient is so afraid of truth that he might collapse under the truth! One man ready to tell the truth, but another man not willing to hear the truth—and so that truth never gets told. Over and over, in every realm of life, has that tragedy been repeated!

Perhaps it is never more tragic than when it happens in religion, in matters spiritual. What a melancholy word that is in John's Gospel that tells of Christ coming into a world that didn't want him: "The light shone in darkness, but the darkness comprehended it not"—didn't comprehend it, very likely, because it didn't want to do it! "I am the Truth," said Jesus, but what did men do with Truth? Nailed it to a cross. So St. Paul, after telling the Galatians some stern but needful things, encountered such resentment that we hear him saying to the Galatians later: "Am I become your enemy because I tell you the truth?" Ah yes, the truth does hurt sometimes, perhaps spiritual truth most of all. It hurts our pride. It hurts our business. Very humbling, very costly, strangely frightening often, is the truth. And so we tend to dodge it, to evade it, until we become those pathetic people who have to be lied to in order to be pleased!

But, of course, no one who genuinely walks in the truth will merit that description. He will know that not hearing the truth is as bad as not telling the truth. He will try never to become party to a lie by making it impossible for someone else to speak the truth. Knowing that it takes two people to get the truth told—one to speak it and one to receive it—he will strive always to hear the truth with patience and with courage and without offense.

I challenge you then to measure yourself by that standard, even as I challenge myself. We ministers sometimes feel that we cannot preach the truth to our congregations on many questions because they do not want the truth. A few years ago I tried to tell you the naked truth about war, and it was one of the most unpopular sermons I ever preached! I beg you: do not force me to tell you something less than the truth in order to keep your friendship or maintain your interest in the church! If by any means you compel me to tone

down the truth, to overdecorate it, to quench it or cover it up, then such attitudes come pretty close to making liars of all of us!

Of the Russian scientist, Metchnikoff, Paul De Kruif says that "he was always doing experiments to defend an idea, and not to find the hidden truths of nature." Too often the church has been guilty of that error. But no man walks in the truth who is devoted merely to defending preconceived ideas. Not even the Holy Spirit can guide a closed mind into the truth. He alone walks in the truth, and is led by the Spirit of Truth, who with humble mind goes on finding the larger truths of God.

"I have no greater joy than to know that my children walk in the truth." That was said by an early Christian of his spiritual children, his sons and daughters in the faith. But may we not truly imagine God saying it of all his children? "I have no greater joy than to know that my children walk in truth"—wishing not only to tell what truth they know but to find the truth more fully in order to tell it more faithfully! Such was the prayer of the poet when he said:

> Truth, be more precious to me than the eyes
> Of happy love; burn hotter in my throat
> Than passion, and possess me like my pride;
> More sweet than freedom, more desired than joy,
> More sacred than the pleasing of a friend.

O Thou God of truth, may that be our prayer, too!

Our Age and the Gospel

IT is notorious that our age cannot sound out the positive note. We are not cocksure today about anything. We tend to deal in negations: it is of our uncertainties that we are certain. It is not our fault but it is our misfortune that we cannot answer questions, we can only ask them and leave them open. The more men feel their deep need for a palpable, self-authenticating authority which they can make their own, live by and rejoice in—the more wistfully do they confess their obvious lack of it.

This is nowhere clearer than in the sphere of traditional Christian belief. We reject the old plan of salvation, the old platforms and confessions: we can no longer use the Bible as an armory of proof texts for the annihilation of the unbelieving. We have no systematic theology to take the place of the old, no *summa* or *institutio* at once comprehensive, thought out, applicable, authoritative. . . .

We need a new sense, in these days of disintegration, of what Catholic as well as Protestant, monk as well as Puritan never dreamed of doubting—that the gospel comes from God, not men: it is not man's highest idealism: it is God's word, his last word to the universe. Last of all he sent unto them his Son. The gospel is concerned primarily not with what I ought to do for God, but with what God has done for me. It rests for its validity not on that ephemeral thing—the prevailing fashion of thought, the bemusing sentiment of the moment: when we stand up to deliver the message with which we have been entrusted, we are speaking God's speech after him, we help to make articulate and plain the eternal meaning of the universe. We preach not ourselves.

A minister is a man of God, which means even more than a godly man: he is God's man, not his own: he is God's apostle and mouthpiece: his business is God-given and God-authenticated: he has nothing to do with results. . . .

The world is crying aloud, now consciously, now unconsciously, for a new world. You cannot have a new world without God. There can be no true sociology without a true theology as its presupposition. That is the first thing. And there can be no true theology which does not touch life at every point and transform it. That is the second complementary thing.

God has spoken to us in his Son. This speech, this word, is our foundation, our joy, our challenge. We are allowed by God to be entrusted with the good news of it. He that calleth us is faithful.

The Presbyterian Banner.

A Pastoral Prayer

By Preston Bradley

ETERNAL Spirit, with great gratitude we lift our hearts and our voices in this morning moment of our Sunday association together. Amidst all the hurly-burly, all the clatter and crash of life which is about us so much of the time, how could we live, how could we endure without these moments of enrichment and of supply?

We are grateful that deep in our inner hearts there exists always the hunger for the Source of all strength and beauty.

As we see those who are utterly neglectful of these opportunities, to whom a quiet moment is a horrible moment, and to whom a moment of thought and of pause in the presence of the din of life is an unbearable moment, might we somehow, now, be a humble instrument to some such life—a life in turmoil, in bewilderment, in confusion, with defeated ambitions, anxieties, cares—hesitant for tomorrow's dawn because of the certainty that it brings tomorrow's anguish. Oh, in this great world of confusion, of battle and barter and trade, when shall we all learn again the higher sanities by which we can endure an insane world?

And so, today, we would send from out the created atmosphere of this moment to every heart—pause for a moment, quiet for a moment, peace for a moment. For every distorted life may there be clearer vision, for every disturbed heart a quiet moment; then shall we see things differently, then shall be the beginning of our recovery and the renewal of our strength.

The windows of our souls are open, the doors have been flung wide, waiting for the presence of that eternal reality which, when it becomes a part of us, will give us triumphant living, masterly living. For this, amid the beauty and the quiet, we wait.

Integrity of Preaching

By Paul Jones

POWER in preaching does not depend primarily upon excellence of method or significance of content. Both of these are necessary to good preaching; but if they were the main requisites, it would be quite possible with careful training to produce powerful preachers in any theological school. We are realistic enough not to expect that to happen, for we recognize that there must be something more than the things which can be taught.

A glance at some of the difficulties which confront the modern preacher will throw considerable light on this matter.

• *Giving the Public What It Wants*

The most obvious factor in the present situation is that the preacher, in his effort to get the attention of people for his message, is in competition with all the modern agencies of publicity—the newspapers, magazines, books, movies and radio; all striving for a hearing with the 120,000,000 people of the country, and all of them geared to "give the public what it wants." If the preacher is going to accept the challenge on those terms, either he will have to outshout them by the novelty of his method, or outguess them as to what the public wants. It is true that some preachers can do either or both of those things. Their success is a triumph of both method and content, but is that power?

A second difficulty arises from the fact that most preachers are restricted in their field of operations to the relatively small group which makes up their parish—a group which is already familiar with the general content of their message. By that fact, the preacher is denied the opportunity for novelty of content; and if he introduces too great novelty of method or novelty of interpretation, he is apt to get in wrong with the group which usually has definite ideas of what it wants. We do not like to admit that the preacher is the hired man of the congregation, but in actual practice there seems to be considerable truth in the phrase. Few have dared face the question fully, hired for what? For while we would like to feel that he is hired to bring them the word of God as he has discovered it, too often that is true only within their terms. Not infrequently the development of skill in method and the use of care in choosing the content of his preaching may make him the idol of his congregation; but is that power?

And then we live in a civilization whose very air is corrupted by modern methods of advertising. In its anxiety to get results, anything goes, truth is unimportant, and advertising is quite ready, if it promises to serve its purpose, to use appeals to egotism, self-interest, cupidity, sex or snobbishness. In such an atmosphere it is not surprising that Dale Carnegie's book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People,* has become a best seller, for it applies those methods to the business of "selling" one's self. Hugh Stevenson Tigner in an article in the *Christian Century* has well described the message of the book as the art of the spider and the fly. Advertising has so debased the intellectual coinage of the day that the preacher is constrained to inflate his own language to make up for it. Everyone knows what is meant when it is said, "He's just preaching." Either people discount all they hear as being biased, partisan, exaggerated, or special pleading, or they simple-mindedly swallow anything as true, and an honest preacher is unable to compete. The better his method and the richer his content, the more of a super-salesman he appears to be. Bruce Barton, in his *The Man Nobody Knows* some years ago, by describing Jesus as a premier salesman, inadvertently burst that bubble for thinking people. However effective those methods may be for certain ends, they surely do not represent power.

Paul Jones

• *Two Conceptions of Preaching*

All this throws us back to a reconsideration of what preaching is—what it is that the preacher is trying to do. There are, I think, two main conceptions of the preaching function. Th first would regard it as a necessa adjunct to the successful running of parish. It is the preacher's business interest, win, guide, instruct, inspi and lead his people on their way; a his preaching is the principal means accomplish that purpose. Obviously h method and the content of his preac ing would be important there. B that conception of preaching was val when the church was taken f granted, when people accepted it a grew up in it, when the preacher w thought of as a "man of God," and t public was ready to accept his leade ship.

Today, however, in view of the di ficulties which have been referred t those presuppositions do not hold. Nicholas Murray Butler has put "The church has abdicated as a serio teacher of religion." The church on the defensive; it has made too ma compromises with the spirit of the a to be accorded a position of leadershi Under those circumstances, preachi that merely keeps the church a goi concern, that tends to stabilize it whe it is, is not enough.

But there is another view of preac ing that conceives of it not just as adjunct to an institution, but as t proclamation of a gospel which t world in general and perhaps ma in the church do not understand. It a call to a transformed life, both individuals and society, a way that r leases the individual for fuller li and makes possible the kingdom God. Such preaching differs from o dinary "successful" preaching, for is aimed to reach, not the usual want desires, appetites and prejudices whi advertising tries to appeal to, but summons people to become what th might be.

• *Preaching As Related t The Purpose of Jesu*

This latter conception of preachi would seem to be closest to the a and purpose of Jesus. The church, he thought of it at all, was only means to the end which he sought— a redeemed or transformed world. H certainly did not appeal to the co fortable people of his day; but t record is clear that he did speak wi authority, with power.

There, perhaps, we get the clue that something which is needed to gi preaching real vitality. Mary E Lyman, in her little book entitle *Jesus,* has put it in these word "Jesus' unique contribution to religio was in the dynamic of his personali as identified with his message. B

hind the teaching was the life, giving fresh and vital meaning to the teaching."

In a word, his message came out of his life. He was at home in his world, in the larger sense of that term; confident in the support of the universe—God; sure of the latent capacity and worth of his fellow men; knowing what was wrong in their relationships, and not trying for himself the futile task of trying to serve both God and mammon. He was an undivided personality, he represented wholeness in every sense of the term, so that words and deeds chimed in perfect harmony. Integrity is the word for it, and it was the secret of his power.

• *What Kind of Preaching For Today?*

There is no reason to believe that the conditions which underlie powerful preaching have changed since Jesus' day; and this need for a fundamental integrity has always been recognized by those who have penetrated most deeply into the matter. A generation ago Phillips Brooks defined preaching as "the revelation of truth through personality," and Joseph Fort Newton has spoken of it as including "the authority of insight and the verity of experience."

In a world as uncertain and confused as this is, whose typical disease has been said to be schizophrenia, or divided personality, integrity of preaching becomes of exceptional importance. How can a minister preach to a schizophrenic world if he himself is not integrated, if he himself has not found that unity of life and word which alone can carry conviction?

Preaching with power to transform can be expected to come only from a transformed life, integrity of preaching only from integrity of life.

There is a piece of advice that is often given to young preachers that should be considered here. It is said, "Don't preach your doubts." There is, of course, an element of truth there. One should not emphasize the negative side of things exclusively, and one should be careful not to unsettle poeple's convictions. There is too little conviction of any kind abroad in the world to risk dissipating any of it lightly. But where the preacher, out of his experience, has come to have serious doubts about the standards of conduct in his day, about tendencies in the church, about imperfect racial relations, about the moral limitations of the social order, or about war, he must preach those doubts, even though he may not have the clear answer to them.

• *How Attain Integrity Of Preaching?*

It is easy to talk about integrity of life as a foundation for integrity of preaching, but how does one achieve it? There are, of course, no set rules that can be laid down, but I would venture to suggest two lines of approach that have been found to be useful by those who have valued integrity.

The first is simplicity of living. At first glance this may seem superflous advice to ministers, the very conditions of whose work and the usual nature of whose stipends, except for a few, enforces a considerable measure of simplicity. It is, however, not the amount that one spends that marks simplicity of living, but the purpose of the spending and the relationship to one's income. The minister should not let the desire for the superficial standards of the world get such a hold on him that his life and words become controlled by that factor. When a man comes to feel that he *has* to have a certain income, that consideration is apt to take precedence over the call of a particular piece of work. When a minister feels that he *has* to stay in a particular church where his stipend is assured, he can no longer give free expression to his message. In a word, when he has to consider the possible financial effect of his preaching, the minister's essential integrity is badly impaired.

• *Providing Reserves for Emergences*

Dr. Arthur E. Morgan, formerly president of Antioch College and now head of the TVA, gives exactly this advice to those who would retain their integrity in the business or professional world today. In his book *The Long Road* he says: "Another very important element of conduct is the habit of self-denial, foresight and accumulation of reserves for times of stress. Periods of stress will come. They can best be surmounted by those who have kept themselves vigorous and tempered to privation, who have achieved poise and have learned to use their energies temperately, who have habitually lived within their means, who have reserves for emergency, and who have planned in advance the steps to take when stress comes." If that is necessary for men in industrial and financial life, in order to be able to resist the pressure to make compromises, it will be the least that can be expected of a minister. He must avoid commitments to those standards and practices of contemporary society which by their financial demands upon him would tend to seal his lips in the presence of a serious moral crisis.

• *Entering Into Living Experience With Men*

But there is a positive side to the building of the kind of life and character out of which integrity of preaching may come. It involves entering into living experience with those individuals whose lives need transformation and even more with those groups which need release from the heavy pressure of conventional society. It is not enough just to study about them, to know about them and sympathize with them, no matter how sincerely. Intellectual and emotional understanding and agreement is no substitute for a process of identification of one's self with the individuals and groups in question. The minister who would speak with authority for them must be one of them.

The point is that, when a crisis comes, it is the groups that we belong to rather than the principles to which we have given intellectual assent which determine our course of action. This is well illustrated by the remark of a friend of mine, high in the church, who, during the war, said to me: "I sympathize with your point of view and I believe you are right in holding that war is incompatible with Christianity; but how can I go back upon all those people, bishops, scholars and statesmen, who I know are sincere and whose opinion I have always been accustomed to respect? I haven't enough confidence in myself to set myself up against their judgment." And he didn't. We must pick our group as well as our ideas, if the message is to come straight.

Integrity of preaching with Jesus meant letting his preaching come directly out of his life and experience. That was simple, straight and true; his sympathy and understanding were not artificially stimulated. It was no accident that he spoke with authority.

• *Secrets of Power in Preaching*

But the point need not be labored. We probably all recognize the nature of this integrity. Yet what will be its result, if it is in a measure attained? Certainly it will not guarantee a successful ministry, as success is ordinarily understood. That, however, could hardly be expected, for Jesus warned his followers, "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you." Nor will the minister who speaks with real power necessarily live happily ever after!

But in spite of the difficulities, no one can doubt the need for preachers who have a vital message for a blatant, superficial, disillusioned world.

Such a preacher will properly use all the skill and training that will make his method more effective. He will cultivate, as much as he can, learning, imagination, sympathy; yes, elocution, physical training and psychology— anything which will make him a more adequate instrument for the expression of divine truth. And he will seek to make the content of his preaching as rich and deep and immediate as his capacity will allow.

But, if he wants his preaching to be more than sounding brass and tinkling cymbal, and if he is not going to be satisfied with merely interesting people, crowding his church and keeping his organization going, he will never forget that real power in preaching grows only out of integrity of thought and life. Then he will say, "And with God be the rest."

WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE

Rev. GEORGE A. BUTTRICK *is a native* of England and received his education at Lancaster Independent College, Manchester, and at Victoria University. He was ordained in the Congregational ministry in 1915, and his first pastorates were at Quincy, Ill., and Rutland, Vt. In 1920 he was called to the First Presbyterian Church, Buffalo, and after seven years of service there went to the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York, his present pastorate.

About two years ago Rev. DAVID A. MACLENNAN went to Eaton Memorial Church, Toronto, Ont., after a six year ministry at Emmanuel Church in the same city. Mr. MacLennan received his B.A. from the University of Manitoba, and his B.D. from United Theological College, Montreal. He pursued postgraduate study at Harvard University.

Since 1930 Rev. LYNN HAROLD HOUGH has been professor of homiletics and comprehensive scholarship, also dean, at Drew University. Preceding his service at Drew he was minister of Central Methodist Church, Detroit, and the American Presbyterian Church, Montreal, Can. From 1914 to 1919 he was professor of historical theology at Garrett Seminary, and for a year was president of Northwestern University. Dr. Hough has written many books.

Ministering to Collegeside Church (Congregational), Nashville, Tenn., Rev. WILLIAM A. KEITH has in his congregation many students and faculty members from Nashville's universities and colleges. Mr. Keith received degrees from both the University of Chicago and the Chicago Theological Seminary. He is moderator of the Tennessee Conference of the Congregational-Christian Churches.

Rev. FREDERICK H. KNUBEL *was ordained* in the ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1896. In that year he founded the Church of the Atonement, New York City, and was its pastor until 1923. He has been highly honored by his denomination, having been president of the United Lutheran Church in America since 1918. The sermon published in this issue is a radio address delivered by Dr. Knubel over the network of the N.B.C.

Rev. VICTOR M. RHEIN, *who received* his B.D. from Union Seminary, was assistant minister of Broadway Tabernacle, New York, for three years, and is now minister of the First Congregational Church, South Norwalk, Conn.

Rev. JOHN W. CYRUS *was educated at* Eureka College and at the University of Chicago. He is in his first pastorate, at South Prospect Christian Church, Milwaukee, Wis.

Graduating from the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary in 1930, Rev. J. H. MARION, JR., went to his first pastorate in Caruthersville, Mo. Since 1933 he has ministered at the Oakland Avenue Presbyterian Church, Rock Hill, S. C. This church is located just off the campus of Winthrop College, a college for women. Five years ago Mr. Marion spent a period of travel and study in Europe and Palestine on a seminary fellowship.

Rev. PRESTON BRADLEY *has for more* than a quarter century ministered to the famous People's Church of Chicago.

Bishop PAUL JONES, *of the Protestant* Episcopal Church, is college preacher at Antioch College, in Ohio. Bishop Jones' contribution to this issue is an address delivered at Meadville Theological Seminary, Chicago.

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

CHARLES F. AKED, All Soul's Church, Los Angeles, "China and Japan: a Hell Upon Earth—But What Can We Do?" Rev. 21:2—"I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God."

WILLIAM B. MATHEWS, The Stone Church, New Bedford, Mass. "God or Chaos." Exod. 20:3—"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

PRESTON BRADLEY, People's Church, Chicago. "Keeping Sane in an Insane World." Job 4:4—"Thy words have kept people on their feet." (Moffatt)

C. K. MAHONEY, Central Methodist, Spokane. "Cross versus Swastika." Mark 12:17—"And Jesus said unto them, Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

GUY C. TETERICK, University Methodist, Tulsa, Okla. "St. John's New Year Wish." III John:2—"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

ERNEST F. ROESTI, Linwood Evangelical, Evansville, Ind. "Is Democracy Safe for the World?" I Peter 2:16—"Live like free men, only do not make your freedom an excuse for doing wrong." (Goodspeed)

JOSEPH W. REEVES, North Congregational, Winchendon, Mass. "Has Christianity Failed?" Luke 23:28—"Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."

D. W. CHARLTON, First Baptist, East New Market, Md. "The Return to Religion." Isa. 17:7, 8—"Then shall men look to their Maker . . . looking to nothing that their hands have made, turning to nothing fashioned by their fingers." (Moffatt)

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

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Title of Sermon

.....
Text used (write out the text)

.....
Name of minister

.....
Name of church

.....
Address

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

IN A month full of events of world staggering importance, how shall I select just one? Irresistibly there comes the reflection that the greatest event of all is Christmas. Can Christmas really come this December? How can it come in a world full of un-Christmas-like events? Did Christmas ever before knock at the world's door when the world was so upset and desperate, and so cursed with hate and war? Yet it knocks again at the door. And it will come in. It will come because we cannot help its coming. And that, not because it has a place in the calendar of time, but because it has an ineluctable place in our hearts. But our hearts are full of fear, you say, and full of guilt because we have let the world come to its present plight. Yes; but let Christmas come! Let it come to mock us, if it will. But it will not mock us—Christmas cannot mock even the guiltiest of us and still be Christmas. It can subdue us and convict us of our sin. It can unfurl the banner of God's everlasting grace above our bended heads. It can lay hold of our defeated hopes and bring them to life again—our hopes of brotherhood, of peace, of salvation. As long as Christmas keeps coming, mankind cannot altogether despair. But when Christmas no longer comes, then we are indeed lost. And Christmas will be here tomorrow—on the very day after I have finished writing this. That is why I call it the supremely important event of the month—that it is able in such a world of war and social struggle to come at all!

Christmas

The Book of the Month

CHRISTIAN HOPE FOR WORLD SOCIETY, *by John T. McNeill. Willett, Clark & Company, $2.50.*

IF YOU think the social gospel is a new and modern addition to the Christian faith, you are in for an awakening the moment you open this book. I was going to say a "rude awakening," but it will not be rude; it will be a thrilling discovery. Christianity from the beginning has been the carrier of a great social hope, says Professor McNeill. Even the apocalypticism of the early church was not socially negative. And as Christianity outgrew its expectation of a supernatural event ushering in the Kingdom of God, it began to extend its sense of social responsibility beyond its own community to the whole secular order by which it was environed. In Augustine's *City of God* the social ideal of Christianity became explicit. With the fall of Rome, the church assumed the whole burden of training the hordes of raw barbarians and imparting to them the heritage both of Christian faith and Western culture which was thus preserved from oblivion. Dr. McNeill traces with fascinating erudition the very mundane activities of the church through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and by extensive quotation and illuminating interpretation shows how Protestantism itself, despite its major interest in individual salvation, actively assumed a Christian responsibility for human welfare and social justice. He brings you down to date in the missionary movement, in which he senses a strong social impulse, and in the more explicit tasks to which American and British churchmanship in our day is committed. The book is too rich with historical insight to give it an adequate characterization in this short space. It will prove to be a mine of knowledge, both historical and apologetic, to everyone who reads it.

A Thought for the Month

THE MOST important phenomenon in contemporary Christianity is the new emergence of the Christian church as the commanding object of religious thought. Our controversies in the past have centered in doctrines of faith and order. We are now discovering that none of these is fundamental. Before there were doctrines there was the church. Before there were creeds there was the church. Before there was a New Testament there was the church. It was the church that produced all these, not these that produced the church. We cannot therefore understand any of them, nor come to satisfactory convictions ourselves about the matters of which they treat, until we come to an understanding of the church. This emergence of the church into the focus of our attention is no mere theoretical matter: it is occasioned by the desperate condition into which our humanistic civilization has come. Western civilization is disintegrating before our eyes, and upon the Chrstian church devolves the responsibility for the creation of an enduring society. It is an hour in which Christian people may take their stand with John on the little Isle of Patmos and look with apocalyptic eyes upon the kingdoms of this world, drunk with power and the ambition for power, rushing in the madness of their desperation to their own destruction. We may not like the imagery which John employs to body forth his vision of the world of his day—the imagery of the beast with eyes before and behind, and of horses with stings in their tails, and of the dragon that came out of the abyss, and of the woman with the wings of an eagle, and of the ten horns, and of that old serpent, the devil. But this realism which has always seemed so grotesque when we have read it in the piping times of world stability, is startlingly appropriate to the world in which we live. Only we must see the whole vision of the apocalypse. With John, we must look above the madness and desolation of this world and see the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven and building itself upon foundations which take hold upon the very throne of God. The Christian church, under God, is the builder of that city. No less a task has God given it. The church is the hope of our confused and suffering world.

The Church as the Hope of the World

Charles Clayton Morrison

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